



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

Bureau of Community and Environmental Health

HEALTH CONSULTATION fact sheet

What is a Health Consultation?

A Health Consultation (HC) provides advice on a specific public health issue related to existing or potential human exposure to toxic materials. They can address health risks related to a specific site, chemical release, or hazardous material. The recommendations made in a Health Consultation are designed to prevent adverse health effects to the public; however, they do not carry regulatory authority.

What is the purpose of a Health Consultation?

A Health Consultation is a way for the Idaho Division of Health, Bureau of Community and Environmental (BCEH) to respond quickly to a need for health information. BCEH staff evaluates information available about toxic materials at the site, determines whether people might be exposed to it and reports the potential for adverse human health effects as a result of exposure. They are intended to assist in preventing or decreasing exposure to hazardous materials by drawing conclusions and making recommendations that may lead to specific actions, such as, increasing environmental sampling, restricting site access, or removing contaminated materials.

The Health Consultation may consider:

- The type and extent of site contamination
- If people are exposed and how
- Potential harm to human health
- Other dangers to people such as unsafe buildings, abandoned mine shafts, and other physical hazards.

Anyone can request a health consultation. BCEH receives requests from the public and local health and environmental agencies.

What is the result of a Health Consultation?

Every Health Consultation includes conclusions about public health hazards and recommendations for actions to protect the public's health. Recommendations can cover many activities by the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, BCEH, and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.

Recommendations can result in:

- Site cleanup activities (i.e., removing hazardous waste, treatment of contaminated soil or water)
- Protecting people from contamination and physical dangers (i.e., relocating people away from contaminated areas or setting up barriers)
- Community environmental health education
- Health Studies
- Public Health Assessment
- Public Health Advisories

Bureau of Community and Environmental Health (BCEH)

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